

## Claims

What is claimed is:

- 3 <sup>9/3/2</sup> 1. A method of managing processing groups of a  
4 distributed computing environment, said method comprising:
- 5 comparing at least a portion of a state of a  
6 prospective member of a processing group with at least  
7 a portion of a group state of the processing group;
- 8 updating said at least a portion of the state of  
9 said prospective member, should said comparing indicate  
10 a difference; and
- 11 joining said prospective member to said processing  
12 group.
- 1 2. The method of claim 1, further comprising:
- 2 quiescing activity to said group state; and
- 3 retrieving said group state after quiescing  
4 activity, for use in said comparing.

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1           3.    A system of managing processing groups of a  
2 distributed computing environment, said system comprising:

3                   means for comparing at least a portion of a state  
4 of a prospective member of a processing group with at  
5 least a portion of a group state of the processing  
6 group;

7                   means for updating said at least a portion of the  
8 state of said prospective member, should said comparing  
9 indicate a difference; and

10                  means for joining said prospective member to said  
11 processing group.

1           4.    The system of claim 3, further comprising:

2                   means for quiescing activity to said group state;

3                   and

4                   means for retrieving said group state after  
5 quiescing activity, for use in said comparing.

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1           5.    At least one program storage device readable by a  
2 machine, tangibly embodying at least one program of  
3 instructions executable by the machine to perform a method  
4 of managing processing groups of a distributed computing  
5 environment, said method comprising:

6                    comparing at least a portion of a state of a  
7 prospective member of a processing group with at least  
8 a portion of a group state of the processing group;

9                    updating said at least a portion of the state of  
10 said prospective member, should said comparing indicate  
11 a difference; and

12                   joining said prospective member to said processing  
13 group.

1           6.    The at least one program storage device of claim 5,  
2 further comprising:

3                    quiescing activity to said group state; and

4                    retrieving said group state after quiescing  
5 activity, for use in said comparing.

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